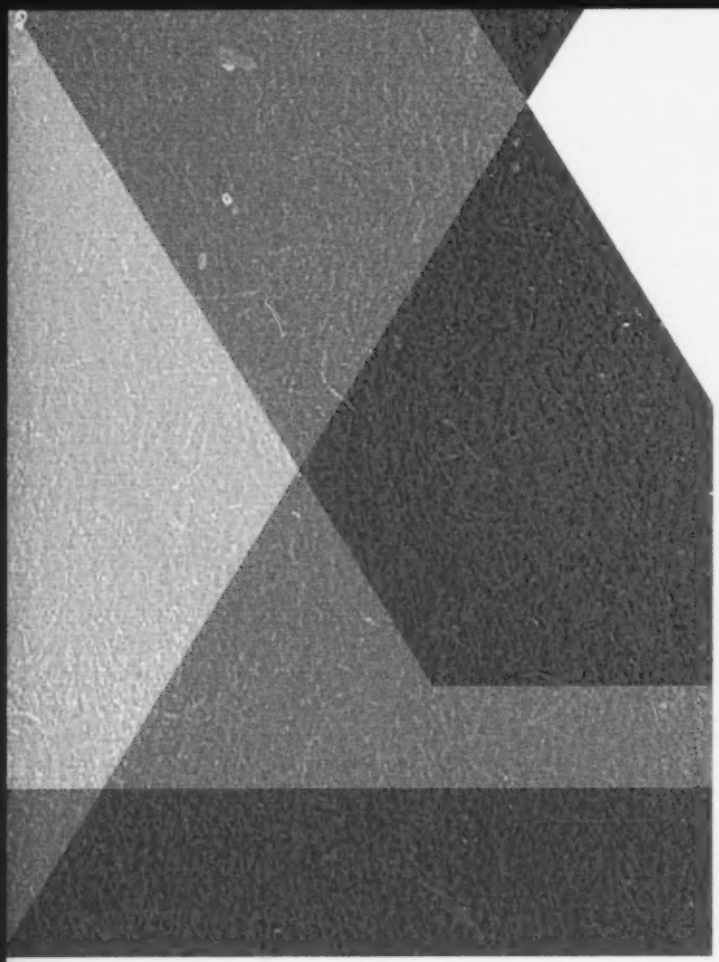

Business Plan

2018–19

Department of Education
and Early Childhood Development

NOVA SCOTIA

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Budget 2018–19: Business Plan
March 2018

ISBN: 978-1-55457-821-4

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Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development's Business Plan for 2018-19.

In 2018-19, the department will continue to invest in the Nova Scotia public education system so that students, families, and educators get the resources and support they need to succeed. As the department continues to advance improvements to the early years and public education systems in Nova Scotia, the priority for 2018-19 will be to implement recommendations stemming from the review of the province's education administrative system. The department will also continue to implement recommendations and advice from the Council to Improve Classroom Conditions and the Commission on Inclusive Education.

The goal of these changes is to shift resources from administration into classrooms to support students, and give parents and teachers a greater local voice about priorities for their school. The department has accepted Dr. Glaze's recommendation to shift from a system of nine disconnected silos to one coherent, aligned model, focused on student learning and achievement. It is important that we recognize that our education system has not fundamentally changed in 20 years. Since that time, there has not been a real look at how the education system is administered. This transition, based on Dr. Glaze's report, will be a significant undertaking that will require collaboration and cooperation from all education partners.

The department will continue to implement play-based pre-primary programming in many schools across Nova Scotia. This program is available to 4 year olds, providing them with access to high-quality early learning programs based on Nova Scotia's first ever Early Learning Curriculum Framework. The department is planning to expand the pre-primary program with new locations for September 2018. It is estimated that the program will be expanded to include approximately an additional 130 classes in 2018-19, for a total of 184 classes.

As we continue to review the public school program, the Council to Improve Classroom Conditions will continue to address the challenges our teachers face in the classroom. In 2018-19, the Council will continue to play an important role in the work of the department, with a mandate to direct how the province will continue to invest in classrooms during the next school year.

The department will explore ways to improve inclusive education for students in Nova Scotia. At the end of March 2018, the Commission on Inclusive Education released a comprehensive report that includes measurable education goals for implementing inclusive education, with specific recommendations for improving teaching and learning conditions in support of the goals.

It is a time of change for the education system in Nova Scotia. We need to work together to create a re-invigorated, coherent, and responsive education system for the benefit of Nova Scotian students, with a focus on strategic excellence in teaching and leadership.

Original signed by

Honourable Zach Churchill
Minister, Education and Early Childhood Development

Vision, Mission, and Mandate

Vision

All children and students are confident and proud, maximizing their potential and contributing to a thriving society.

Mission

The department will lead the transformation of the early years and public education system. We will do this by designing an innovative curriculum, facilitating excellence in teaching and learning, ensuring equity throughout the system, and working closely with our partners in education. This will provide children, students, and families with a strong foundation for success.

Mandate

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has a broad mandate that includes responsibility for early childhood development and the education of children and youth through the public school system. The department's mandate is carried out through:

- child, youth, and family-centered programs and services
- early learning and care programs for children from birth to school entry
- high-quality educational programs and student services in both of Canada's official languages
- strong assessment and evaluation services
- a focus on creating a more culturally-responsive and inclusive education system
- a progressive and responsive policy environment
- effective financial management, facilities planning, and comptrollership
- teacher education and certification, with a focus on high standards of excellence in teaching and leadership
- effective opportunities for ongoing, high-quality professional learning for teachers and principals
- educational research and partnerships

A number of actions and initiatives are currently underway to advance the department's mandate. Through these actions the department will:

- Continue working with the Council to Improve Classroom Conditions and the Commission on Inclusive Education to deliver meaningful change
- Continue to implement universal full day pre-primary for four-year olds
- Continue to reinstate Reading Recovery for all of Nova Scotia over the next two years
- Continue to ensure that waitlists for speech and language help, and psychological services remain manageable
- Implement recommendations coming from the review of the administrative structure of school boards
- Support the Department of Health and Wellness to implement the Social ABCs program with Autism Nova Scotia
- Continue to expand the SchoolsPlus program to all schools by 2019-20

- Continue the expansion of the skilled trades centres in high schools and continue to enhance vocational options in the school system

Improving Early Childhood and P-12 Education

Government continues to invest in the Nova Scotia public education system so that students, families, and educators get the resources and support they need to succeed. The Education System Administrative Review recommendations, along with the information gained from the Council to Improve Classroom Conditions and the Commission on Inclusive Education will be used to guide the work of the department in 2018-19.

Education System Administrative Review

In 2017, the Province engaged an independent consultant, Dr. Avis Glaze, to conduct a comprehensive education system administrative review of Nova Scotia's education system. The purpose of the review was to examine and make recommendations to improve the administrative structure of the education system, including the role of elected school boards and their central office administration, and the administration at the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

The result of the review conducted by Dr. Glaze has led to one of the most transformative times for public education in over 20 years in our province. Government accepted the spirit and intent of the recommendations in Dr. Avis Glaze's report, *Raise the Bar: A Coherent and Responsive Education Administrative System for Nova Scotia*. This means a shift from a system of nine disconnected silos to one coherent, aligned model, focused on student learning and achievement. Effective April 2018, Nova Scotia will have seven regional center for education, led by a regional executive director reporting directly to the Deputy Minister Education and Early Childhood Development. This will unify and integrate the system, ensure that best practices are employed in every part of the province, and help ensure that student achievement levels are consistent from one end of the province to the other, which will ensure more resources are put in the classroom and more empowerment is given to our front lines.

Other changes government will make in 2018-19 include:

- Enhancing the role and influence of School Advisory Councils (SACs) for all schools, with consultation on expanded role, funding, support, and diversity in membership, as well as funding to respond to school priorities.
- Creating the Provincial Advisory Council on Education including 15 representatives from all regions, and diverse communities and backgrounds.
- Elevating voices of Mi'kmaq and African Nova Scotians including, African Canadian and Mi'kmaq representation on transition team, Provincial Advisory Council on Education, greater representation on School Advisory Council, and new Executive Director positions added at the department.
- Moving teaching support specialists (literacy leads, math mentors) out of regional offices and into classrooms.
- Providing teachers and principals the responsibility for the selection of learning resources to support the needs of their students.

- Growing teachers influence on curriculum development and creating greater opportunities for regional and head office staff to move back and forth via secondments.
- Reducing conflicts of interest by removing principals, vice-principals, other supervisory staff, from the Nova Scotia Teachers Union (NSTU) and creating, by legislation, an association for these individuals.
- Focusing on standards for excellence in teaching and leadership.

Council to Improve Classroom Conditions

The Council to Improve Classroom Conditions was established in March 2017 to improve the teaching and learning environment in Nova Scotia classrooms by working to reduce demands on teachers' time that limit their ability to support student learning. The Council allows teachers and government to work collaboratively to address issues identified by educators in the classroom.

In 2017-18, the Council established class caps for both junior high and senior high school classes. They added 139 new teachers to classrooms. This work resulted in class caps for all grade levels across the province. The Council also worked closely with the department to develop the first even, provincewide attendance policy, which principals have reported is already working to help improve student attendance.

In 2018-19, The Council will continue to play an important role in the work of the department, with a mandate to direct how the province will invest $20 million into classrooms.

One of the Council's priorities for 2018-19 is a focus on a provincial assessment policy. The department will work with its partners in education, including the Council to develop an assessment policy, with the goal of having the policy in place for September 2019.

Commission on Inclusive Education

A three-person Commission on Inclusive Education was established to examine the status of inclusive education in public schools in Nova Scotia. The Commission conducted a research-based overview of the current practice and policy, and provided recommendations on how the implementation of inclusive education can be improved, with a focus on funding, resources, and professional development.

At the end of March 2018, the Commission will release a comprehensive strategic plan that includes measurable education goals for implementing inclusive education, with specific recommendations for improving teaching and learning conditions in support of the goals. This report will guide the department's implementation of improvements to inclusive education in Nova Scotia.

Early Childhood Education

In 2017-18, the department introduced play-based pre-primary programming in a number of schools across Nova Scotia. This program is available to 4 year olds in the year before they enter school and will provide them with access to high-quality early learning programs based on Nova Scotia's first ever Early Learning Curriculum Framework. Phase 1 of the program has seen 54 classes, with over 800 four year olds accessing pre-primary education in the province.

The department is planning for new pre-primary program locations for September 2018. It is estimated that the program will be expanded to include an additional 130 new pre-primary classes in 2018-19, with full provincial implementation by the 2020-21 school year.

Early Learning and Child Care Agreement

On January 10, 2018 Nova Scotia signed a three-year, $35-million agreement that will make regulated child care more affordable, accessible and inclusive for children and families. This bilateral agreement builds on the Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework, signed by all provinces and the federal government in June 2017.

In 2018-19, investments will be focused on the following priority areas:

- Making child care more accessible and affordable for Nova Scotia families;
- Supporting quality through workforce development; and
- Imbedding inclusion in early learning and child care environments.

Early Learning Curriculum Framework

The Nova Scotia Early Learning Curriculum Framework has been developed. With a focus on children from birth to eight years of age, the Curriculum Framework informs educators' expectations of children and engages educators in critical thought and reflective practice.

In Spring 2017, the Curriculum Framework was piloted in 41 licensed child care centers and two Early Years Centres across Nova Scotia. The pilot edition of the Curriculum Framework has been used in the Pre-primary Program, which opened in 45 schools in September 2017. The results from the pilot are currently being reviewed to finalize the Curriculum Framework. All provincially funded licensed child care centres and the Pre-primary Program will be using the final Curriculum Framework to guide programming and practice in early Spring 2018.

P-12 Education

Public School Program (PSP)

The renewal of the PSP began in 2015 with a research review and has continued with over 1,800 individuals, involved in the consultations, review of public input into the Action Plan, and other related documentation.

A draft PSP was developed for a final round of consultations and it is expected that the document will be finalized and released after some additional consultation.

Reading Recovery

Reading Recovery is a short-term intervention that provides individually designed and delivered lessons to grade one students who are struggling in reading and writing. The supplementary support promotes literacy skills and fosters the development of reading and writing. Specially trained Reading Recovery teachers deliver 30-minute lessons daily, which include reading familiar books, story writing, assembling stories using cut-up sentences, and reading new books. Lessons are offered daily for approximately 12–20 weeks.

Reading Recovery teachers receive extensive training and professional support on the design and implementation of Reading Recovery lessons, the documentation of teaching and learning, and the collection of data track student progress and inform lesson design and delivery. In-classroom literacy programming continues. In 2017-18 there were 192 schools with Reading Recovery. In 2018-19, 247 schools will have Reading Recovery programs. The goal is to have Reading Recovery reinstated in all schools by the 2019-20 school year.

French Program Services

In 2018-19, the department will begin work on a French Strategy (value of French programming, equity and recruitment & retention of students and teachers), as well as ensure provincial goals are aligned for all Nova Scotian students (including French first language curriculum).

Skilled Trades and Experiential Learning

Skilled Trades Education supports an approach that provides exposure to a wide range of careers, engages students in authentic learning in the community and immerses students in the realities of skilled trades work. In April 2017, the addition of seven Skilled Trades Centres for high schools in Nova Scotia was announced, supporting government's commitment to expand access to skilled trades programs.

Student Supports and Transitions

Education and Early Childhood Development works closely with other departments, agencies, and organizations to provide supports to students, to ensure they have timely access to a wide range of services, including mental health and physical well-being.

The department is also working to further promote cultural awareness and equity for all students by building knowledge of the Treaty Education Framework, implementing provincial professional development on culturally responsive pedagogy, and infusing new and existing curricula with outcomes, resources and strategies that address and reflect our diverse student population.

Priorities related to student supports and transitions include:

- Expanding SchoolsPlus to more schools across the province and collaborating with our partners to enhance services
- Increasing the number of post-secondary transition year programs with the goal of one per school board for graduating high school students with special needs (ACHIEVE)
- Consideration of the recommendations from the Commission on Inclusive Education
- Increased funding to provide student bursaries for 4th year post-secondary tuition for African Nova Scotian students (pending budget approval).

Teaching and Leadership Standards

High-quality teaching is essential to student success. As professionals, teachers have enormous responsibilities and face increasing demands. They need support, time, and structure that will allow them to focus on student learning and achievement.

Priorities related to teaching and leadership standards include:

- Planning professional learning for teachers and principals on the teaching standards

- In collaboration with the NSTU, engage and consult with principals and other education partners on the development of leadership standards for school administrators
- Embedding the teaching standards in the redesigned B Ed programs
- Developing new teacher performance appraisal framework in 2018-19, based on the teaching standards

Performance Measures

STUDENT ASSESSMENTS [1]

The following changes have occurred to the Program of Learning Assessment for Nova Scotia:

- Reading and Writing in Grade 3 (RW3) and Mathematics/Mathématiques in Grade 4 (M4) assessments were not administered in 2017–2018. They will be re-introduced in 2018–2019 as the Nova Scotia Assessment: Reading, Writing, and Mathematics/Mathématiques in Grade 3 (RWM3) which will be administered in spring 2019.

Nova Scotia Assessments: Mathematics

The Nova Scotia Assessment for Mathematics is used to measure student learning and achievement in math for students in grades 4 and 6. The target for this measure is to maintain or increase the percentage of students meeting expectations over the baseline year.

Percentage of Students Meeting Math Expectations			
Nova Scotia Assessment: Mathematics			
	2015-16*	**2016-17**	**2017-18**
Grade 4	76%	77%	*N/A*
Grade 6	68%	70%	70%

* Baseline ***N/A***: Mathematics in Grade 4 and Mathématiques en 4e année were not administered in the 2017-18 school year.

Nova Scotia Assessment: Reading and Writing

The Nova Scotia Assessment for Reading and Writing is used to measure student learning and achievement in literacy for students in grades 3 and 6. Students in the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP) participate in the English-language Nova Scotia Assessment in Reading and Writing in grade 6. French-language provincial assessments in reading and writing are administered to students in grades 3 and 6 attending school in CSAP.

The targets for these measures is to maintain or increase the percentage of students meeting expectations over the baseline year.

[1] The reporting years for assessment results reflect the school year.

Assessment: Reading

Percentage of Students Meeting Reading Expectations				
Nova Scotia Assessment: Reading				
	2014-15*	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Grade 3	68%	67%	68%	*N/A*
Grade 6	74%	73%	73%	74%
L'Évaluation de la Nouvelle-Écosse : lecture (Conseil scolaire acadien provincial)				
	2014-15*	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Grade 3	75%	70%	68%	*N/A*
Grade 6	69%	72%	71%	69%

*Baseline ***N/A***: Reading and Writing in Grade 3, and Lecture et écriture en 3e année were not administered in 2017-18 school year.

Assessment: Writing

Percentage of Students Meeting Writing Expectations				
Nova Scotia Assessment: Writing				
	2014–15*	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Grade 3				
Ideas	76%	73%	73%	*N/A*
Organization	60%	59%	58%	*N/A*
Language Use	64%	63%	63%	*N/A*
Conventions	53%	51%	53%	*N/A*
Grade 6				
Ideas	76%	78%	72%	74%
Organization	61%	62%	57%	59%
Language Use	66%	67%	63%	64%
Conventions	58%	61%	53%	57%
L'Évaluation de la Nouvelle-Écosse : écriture (Conseil scolaire acadien provincial)				
Year	2014–15*	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Grade 3				
Ideas	65%	67%	68%	*N/A*
Organization	59%	58%	60%	*N/A*
Language Use	58%	59%	55%	*N/A*
Conventions	48%	51%	46%	*N/A*
Grade 6				
Ideas	71%	75%	73%	72%
Organization	59%	67%	59%	65%
Language Use	56%	61%	60%	59%
Conventions	43%	47%	44%	42%

*Baseline ***N/A***: Reading and Writing in Grade 3, and Lecture et écriture en 3e année were not administered in 2017-18 school year.

Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results are used to measure 15-year-old students' performance in reading, mathematics, and science and allow for comparison across jurisdictions. The PISA assessment is one of the measures for a desired outcome of increased student learning and achievement in literacy and mathematics. Each assessment includes questions from all three subject areas with a focus on one subject area each time the assessment is administered. The major focus of the 2015 PISA assessment was science. The next administration of PISA is scheduled for Spring 2018 and the major domain assessed will be reading.

The target for this measure is an increase over the 2009 baseline data by the next reporting period.

PISA Results									
	Reading			Math			Science		
	*2009	2012	2015	*2009	2012	2015	*2009	2012	2015
NS Average	516	508	517	512	497	497	523	516	517
Canadian Average	524	523	527	527	518	516	529	525	528
OECD Average	493	496	493	496	494	490	501	501	493

*baseline

Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP)

The Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP) results are used to measure student performance in reading, mathematics, and science in grade 8. The target for this measure is an increase over the 2007 baseline data in the next reporting period.

PCAP Results	2007 Results		2010 Results*		2013 Results	
Subject	NS Average	Canadian Average	NS Average	Canadian Average	NS Average	Canadian Average
Reading	483	500	489	500	488	508
Math	N/A	N/A	474	500	488	507
Science	N/A	N/A	489	500	492	500

*adjusted baseline

Reading Recovery

In 2017-18 there were 192 schools with Reading Recovery. In 2018-19, 247 schools will have Reading Recovery programs. The target of this measure is to have full implementation of Reading Recovery by the 2019-20 school year.

SchoolsPlus Expansion

In the 2017-18 school year SchoolsPlus supported 273 schools, or approximately 73 percent of all schools, through 31 hub sites, in every county, with 30 Facilitators, 51 community outreach workers, and 37 Mental Health Clinicians. The target for this measure is for all schools to have access to SchoolsPlus by the 2019-20 school year.

Skilled Trades and Experiential Learning

In April 2017, the addition of seven Skilled Trades Centres for high schools in Nova Scotia was announced.

The following table represents the Phase 1 and Phase 2 schedule for expansion:

Phase	School	Sept 2018	Feb 2019	Sept 2019	Feb 2020	Sept 2020
Phase 1 Schools	Amherst Regional High School	ST10	CT11	CU11		
	Central Kings Rural High School	ST10	CT11	TT11		
	Richmond Academy	ST10	MT11	CT11		
	Sir John A. MacDonald High School	ST10	CT11	CU11		
Phase 2 Schools	Cobequid Educational Centre			ST10	TT11	MT11
	Digby Regional High School			ST10	TT11	CT11
	Riverview High School			ST10	CT11	TT11

ST10: Skilled Trades 10 CT11: Construction Trades 11 MT11: Manufacturing Trades 11 CU11: Culinary Trades 11 TT11: Transportation Trades 11

High School Graduation Rate

The high school graduation rate is the percentage of students receiving a high school graduation diploma compared with the number of students in grade 9 three years earlier. The target for this measure is to continue to maintain or increase the graduation rate over the baseline in the next reporting period.

High School Graduation Rate							
2009–10*	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13	2013–14	2014–15	2015–16	2016-17
86.1%	88.7%	88.6%	89.6%	89.8%	92.5%	90.7	92.3

*baseline

Pre-Primary

Prep-Primary began in 2017-18, in many schools across Nova Scotia. This program is available to 4 year olds in the year before they enter school and will provide them with access to high-quality early learning programs based on Nova Scotia's first ever Early Learning Curriculum Framework. Phase 1 of the program has seen 54 classes serving more than 800 four year olds.

The department is planning for new pre-primary program locations for September 2018. It is estimated that the program will be expanded to include an additional 130 classrooms in 2018-19. The target for this measure is that all school catchment areas will offer pre-primary by the 2020-21 school year.

Pre-primary Program (100% implementation over 4 years)	
	2017-18
# of sites by school catchment area offering Pre-primary	45
% of total sites by school catchment area	18%

Early Learning and Child Care Agreement

On January 10, 2018 Nova Scotia signed a three-year, $35-million agreement that will make regulated child care more affordable, accessible and inclusive for children and families.
In 2018-19, investments will be focused on the following priority areas:

- Making child care more accessible and affordable for Nova Scotia families;

- Supporting quality through workforce development; and
- Imbedding inclusion in early learning and child care environments.

There are several measures to show progress in priority areas, these are shown in the table below. The baseline has been set as 2017-18, with targets of increasing over the baseline data for each measure.

Affordability, Accessibility, Quality and Inclusion in Child Care	
	2017-18*
Increase in number licensed spaces	17,250
Increase number of new family home day care sites	228
More families benefitting from subsidy enhancement	1225
Increase staff in licensed child care who are engaging in diploma course work while maintaining employment	50
Increase number of licensed child care centres accessing funding to build capacity for inclusion	220**
Increase ECEs in licensed child care receiving inclusion training in the Pyramid Model	200
Increase in individuals receiving ECE training grants/bursaries from under represented populations (Acadian/Francophone, African Nova Scotian, Indigenous, Immigrant and Newcomer)	0

*baseline

Early Development Instrument

The Early Development Instrument (EDI) is a teacher-completed questionnaire, that measures developmental change in populations of young children at school entry in five domains, and is considered to be a reliable predictor of adult health, education, and social outcomes. Schools, school boards, government, researchers and community partners can use this data together with other indicators to identify vulnerable populations of children, and mobilize resources to support young children and their families where it is most needed. The EDI has been collected province-wide in 2013 and 2015. A collection for 2018 is currently underway, with results expected by fall 2018.

Children who fall in the "vulnerable" category, are children who score below the 10th percentile cut-point[2] of the comparison population on any of the five domains. The target is to reduce the percentage of children who are vulnerable in each of the EDI domains by the next reporting period.

Percentage of Nova Scotia Children Vulnerable by EDI Domain		
	2013 (NS Baseline) *	2015
Physical Health and Well-Being	10.3%	9.8%
Social Competence	9.9%	9.1%
Emotional Maturity	9.7%	9.0%
Language and Cognitive Development	10.4%	10.8%
Communication Skills and General Knowledge	10.7%	10.6%
Vulnerable on least one domain	**25.5%**	**25.5%**

* The 2013 EDI data are considered to constitute the NS 'baseline' and used to determine the 10th percentile cut-points for subsequent reporting. The NS baseline is used as a comparison for reporting purposes for the 2015 results and moving forward.

[2] Cut-points are the actual scores marking the 10th percentile; vulnerable children are those who fell below this mark.

Departmental Financial Summary

Departmental Expenses Summary
($ thousands)

Programs and Services	2017–2018 Estimate	2017–2018 Forecast	2018–2019 Estimate
Senior Management	2,837	3,092	3,098
Strategic Policy and Research	2,642	2,565	2,543
Early Years	74,327	81,805	109,223
Centre for Learning Excellence	4,520	3,899	4,700
Education Innovation Programs and Services	15,663	15,431	15,954
Student Equity and Support Services	11,698	11,490	11,740
French Programs and Services	10,099	10,976	9,980
Corporate Services	4,475	5,456	4,973
Public Education Funding	1,020,055	1,019,626	1,060,785
Credit Allocation	7,313	7,487	7,293
Teachers' Pension	90,589	89,897	91,160
School Capital - Amortization	73,439	73,080	76,333
Total Departmental Expenses	1,317,657	1,324,804	1,397,782
Ordinary Recoveries	13,142	19,714	28,592
Funded Staff (# of FTEs)			
Department Funded Staff	197.8	192.9	205.8

Note:
For Ordinary Revenues, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 2
For TCA Purchase Requirements, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 1